THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) Rural Tourism Development strategy has been envisaged as a major . area of growth, development and employment creation in the 10th Plan.

Development of Temples for Tourist Attraction

2415. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether temples in India are some important places of tourist attraction:

(b) if so, how many such places have been identified by Government which attract tourists from all corners of India and abroad;

(c) whether Government have taken any measures for the promotion, development and maintenance of such places; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Identification of tourist centres including temples is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned.

(c) and (d) Promotion, development and maintenance of the temples is done by separate trusts, boards and local bodies. However, Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance in respect of specific tourism infrastructure projects at various pilgrim centres which are prioritised in consultation with State/Union Territory Governments, Financial assistance is also provided to charitable institutions, trusts, boards and local bodies responsible for the maintenance of the pilgrim centres.

During the last 3 years, 48 tourism infrastructure projects amounting to Rs. 1650.41 lakhs were sanctioned at various pilgrim centres in the country.

Valuables stolen from old Lingaraj Temple in Orissa

2416. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ^valuables were stolen from 11th century old Lingaraj Temple in Orissa;